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## EARLY GOVERNORS OF ALTA CALIFORNIA

BY H. D. BARROWS.

It would seem desirable that the Historical Society of Southern California should have a consecutive list of the Governors of California, with dates of their incumbency, together with some account in briefest outline of the personality of each and of the more important events of their several administrations. Such a list would be useful in many ways. It would enable our members to readily and conveniently locate each one historically by dates, and by the salient characteristics of each administration respectively. To supply this desideratum is the object of this paper. The completed list will cover three regimes, namely (1) that of Spain, extending from the settlement of Alta California in 1796 to 1822; (2) that of Mexico from 1822 to 1846; and (3) that of the United States, which commenced in 1846 and extends to the present time. I may supplement this by giving, later, brief biographical sketches of each Governor in separate papers.

I have already read before the society sketches of two notable Governors, namely, of the first Governor, de Portola, and of the founder of this city, Governor Felipe de Neve.

### SPANISH GOVERNORS.

The first Spanish Governor, under whom Alta California was first settled by civilized people, in 1769, and who at that time was also Governor of old or Baja California, was Gaspar de Portola, a captain of the Spanish army, whose term as Governor of the new territory extended from 1769 to July 9, 1770, when he turned over the government to Pedro Fages as military commandante.

Two missions were founded during the term of Governor de Portola, viz: that of San Diego, July 16, 1769, and that of San Carlos de Monterey, July 14, 1771; also two Presidios or military posts, one at San Diego, in 1769, and the other at Monterey in 1770.

Governor de Portola headed an exploring expedition by land from San Diego to the bay of San Francisco, soon after his arrival in the new territory.

Friar Junipero Serra was at the head of the missionary establishments during the administration of Governor de Portola and of

two or three of the Governors who succeeded him.

The successor of de Portola as Civil Governor was Felipe de Barri, whose jurisdiction extended over both the Californias, though he never resided in the new province. His term expired in 1775. The missions founded during his administration were: San Antonio de Padua, July 14, 1771; San Gabriel, Arcangel, Sept. 8, 1771; San Luis Obispo, Sept. 1, 1772. Personally, Governor de Barri exerted but little influence on the affairs of Alta California.

The next Governor was Felipe de Neve, the founder of the Pueblo of Los Angeles, whose term extended from March 4, 1775, to Sept. 10, 1782, or for about seven and a half years. Governor de Neve was, at the time of his appointment, a major of Spanish cavalry, being thereafter promoted successively to the offices of colonel, brigadier general, inspector general, and commandante general of Provincias Internas. He was one of California's ablest Governors, and a constructive statesman who would have commanded respect in any country.

He inaugurated in California the policy of founding civic as distinguished from religious institutions, in the form of pueblos wherein the people, instead of clericals, should govern. His "Reglamento" or system for the government of California remained in force from his time till the coming of the Americans, and in fact, in some qualified form, to this day.

The two pueblos or secular towns founded by him, and the dates thereof were: San Jose, Nov. 29, 1777; Los Angeles, Sept. 4, 1781; besides, under the energetic policy of Father Junipero, the following missions were established during his term: Dolores (at San Francisco), Oct. 9, 1776; San Juan Capistrano, Nov. 1, 1776; Santa Clara, July 18, 1777; San Gabriel, Archangel, Sept. 8, 1778; San Buenaventura, March 3, 1782, together with these two presidios or military posts: San Francisco, 1776; Santa Barbara, 1780.

In fact, the founding of these two secular pueblos was the commencement of the foundation of a civil state. The utter failure of the missionaries, despite their strenuous labors, to make self-governing citizens of the California Indians, compelled the government in after years to follow up the good beginning made by the father of Los Angeles, Governor de Neve, and thoroughly secularize the entire system of local government of the territory.

Don Pedro Fages, a Spanish lieutenant of Catalan volunteers, who had served in various official capacities in Alta California, succeeded de Neve as Governor, his term extending from Sept. 10, 1782, to April 16, 1790, or nearly eight years. Fages, like de

Neve, was an able officer, and a man of great decision and force of character. During his official term the Santa Barbara mission was established Dec. 4, 1786, and La Purisima, Dec. 8, 1787.

On the death of the president of the missions, Junipero Serra, Aug. 28, 1784, Father Tomas Estenega became the president.

JOSE ANTONIO ROMEU

was the next civil Governor of California, his term commencing April 16, 1791, and terminating at his death, April 9, 1792. During his administration a mission was founded Sept. 25, 1791, at Santa Cruz, and another at La Soledad, Oct. 9, 1791.

Romeu's occupancy of the Governorship was brief, and his influence, like that of Governor de Barri, on the affairs of the province, was, compared with that of others, unimportant.

On the death of Governor Romeu, the Lieutenant Governor of the Californias, Jose Joaquin de Arrillaga, then residing at Loreto, Baja California, became Governor ad interim, and, by order of the Viceroy he came to Monterey in July 1793. He performed the duties of Governor till the arrival at Monterey of his successor, Governor Borica, in October, 1794, when he returned to Loreto, and to his old duties of Lieutenant Governor.

But on the resignation of Borica in 1800 on account of ill health, de Arrillaga again became Governor ad interim of the Californias; and in 1804 he was appointed military and political Governor of Alta California, which office he continued to fill till his death, which occurred at La Soledad mission, July 24, 1814.

Taking into account the time Governor de Arrillaga served as Governor, and as acting or ad interim Governor by virtue of his official position as Lieutenant Governor, his services extended over a longer period than that of any other incumbent. And, according to all accounts, he was in every respect a model Governor. During his term Santa Ynez mission was founded, Sept. 17, 1804.

The seventh Spanish Governor of California was Diego Borica, whose official term began in October, 1794, and closed January 16, 1800. His administration was memorable in many respects. As Bancroft truly says: "He was one of the ablest and best rulers the country ever had, always striving for progress in different directions, avoiding controversy, and personally interesting himself in the welfare of all classes," etc.

The following missions were established whilst he was Governor, viz: San Jose, June 11, 1797; San Juan Bautista, June 24, 1797; San Miguel, July 25, 1797; San Fernando, Sept. 8, 1797; San Luis Rey, June 13, 1798.

All the foregoing officials were, I believe, natives of Spain. But the next Governor—successor of de Arrillaga—under the Spanish regime in California, Jose Dario Arguello, was a native of Quere-taro, Mexico. On the death of Governor de Arrillaga in July, 1814, Arguello, being the ranking officer in California, became acting Governor, serving in that capacity till October, 1815, when, having been appointed Governor of Baja California, he gave way to his successor, Pablo Vicente de Sola, the tenth and last Governor of Alta California under the rule of Spain. De Sola was a native of Spain. His term of office as Governor of California extended from August, 1815, to November, 1822, or till the establishment of Mexican independence; and he remained Governor till the next year (1823). The missions founded during this period were: San Rafael, Dec. 14, 1817; San Francisco Solano, Aug. 25, 1823.

I append a tabular list of Spanish Governors:

1. Gaspar de Portola .....1769 to 1771
2. Felipe de Barri .....1771 to 1775
3. Felipe de Neve .....1775 to 1782
4. Pedro Fages .....1782 to 1791
5. Jose Antonio Romeu .....1791 to 1782
6. Jose Joaquin de Arrillaga (ad int.) ....1792 to 1794
7. Diego de Borica .....1794 to 1800
8. Jose Joaquin de Arrillaga .....1800 to 1814
9. Jose Dario Arguello (ad int.) .....1814 to 1815
10. Pablo Vicente de Sola .....1815 to 1822